

DIVERSITY COUNCIL MINUTES: APRIL 9, 2009

The regular monthly meeting of the Diversity Council was held on Thursday, April 9, 2009, in the Knudsen Training Room, located on the first floor of the Jessie Parker Building in Des Moines, Iowa. The meeting was called to order by Chair Preston Daniels at 2:40 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Nancy Berggren, Department of Administrative Services – Human Resources Enterprise (DAS-HRE)
Preston Daniels, Employee and Family Resources, Chair
Renee Hardman, Bankers Trust, Co-Chair
Reginald Jackson, Wells Fargo Bank, N.A.
Robin Jenkins, DAS-HRE
Walter Reed, Jr., Department of Human Rights
Ralph Rosenberg, Iowa Civil Rights Commission
Miriam Tyson, Iowa Department of Economic Development (IDED)
Ray Walton, Department of Administrative Services (DAS)
Stephen Wooderson, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS)

MEMBERS ABSENT

Shirley Hicks, Iowa School for the Deaf, Retired
Jim Larew, Governor's Office (IGOV)
Miguel Moreno, Department of Transportation
Alba Perez, Greater Des Moines Partnership
Jonathan Thorup, Department of Public Safety (DPS)
Dinh VanLo, Tai Village, Inc.

DESIGNEE Syeta Glanton, IGOV, for Jim Larew

OTHER ATTENDEES

Judy Akre, DAS-HRE
Susan Churchill, DAS-HRE, responsible for taking meeting minutes
Beverly Couch, IDED
Tomika Greene, DAS-HRE
Minnie Mallard, Department of Elder Affairs
Barb McClannahan, IVRS
Mick Mulhern, DPS
Matt Oetker, Attorney General's Office
Brenda Reilley, DAS-HRE
Bev Schmeling, IVRS
Bill West, DAS-HRE
Others may have been present who did not sign in.

AGENDA ITEMS

- I. Opening Remarks – Preston Daniels.
 - A. Beginning on May 1, 2009, Walter Reed will move to the Board of Parole and Preston Daniels will be the new Director of Human Rights.
 - B. After today's meeting, Walter Reed will no longer be a member of the Diversity Council.
 - C. Preston Daniels will be meeting with the Governor's Office to find out if he will remain the Chair of the Diversity Council.
- II. Review and Approval of Minutes of March 12, 2009.
 - A. No corrections or additions.
 - B. Minutes approved.
- III. New Business – The Council had no new business to discuss.
- IV. Discuss Status of Council's Work for 2009 – Miriam Tyson.
 - A. The Council discussed a list of fifteen recommendations, some of which will be included in the Council's annual *Report to the Governor* and will provide a focus for the Council's work.
 - B. The Council decided to drop two of the recommendations – at least temporarily – until more research could be done; these recommendations involved:
 1. A state mentoring program.
 2. The establishment of diversity councils in each state department.
 - C. The Council discussed the overall tone of the recommendations.
 1. Some Council members expressed reservations about stating in their report that the Governor *must* or *must not* do certain things.
 2. Renee Hardman stated that the Council should push the envelope and make recommendations – even if the recommendations may be controversial or challenge the status quo – because:
 - a. It is important that recommendations are made and that the Council not speak for the Governor and allow *him* to decide on what recommendation are acceptable or unacceptable.
 - b. Embracing diversity starts at the top, which includes CEOs and/or the Governor.
 - c. The Governor should unequivocally be having regular conversations with all of his Department Directors with regard to their accomplishments in the area of diversity.
 - D. *Because these recommendations were in draft form, they will not be placed on the Diversity Council website.*
- V. Subcommittee Reports
 - A. Diversity Training for the Entire State Workforce – Nancy Berggren spoke on behalf of the Subcommittee.
 1. A total of 1,686 employees attended Diversity Training in March 2009. (Nancy Berggren provided a listing of the breakdown by agency.)
 2. Performance and Development Solutions, which is the DAS Training Department, compiled a random sampling of program evaluations completed by participants of Diversity Training on March 9, 17, 20, 26, and 30.
 3. These two pieces of data will be provided at each Diversity Council meeting.
 - B. Referral System – Due to time constraints, the Subcommittee did not report.
 - C. Best Practices – Due to time constraints, the Subcommittee did not report.
 - D. Persons with Disabilities – Stephen Wooderson spoke on behalf of the Subcommittee.

1. Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services has partnered with the Department of Natural Resources to employ Iowans with disabilities.
 2. Stephen Wooderson provided an article detailing the program, which will be placed on the Diversity Council website.
- E. Public Forum Subcommittee – Reginald Jackson spoke on behalf of the Subcommittee.
1. The Council discussed the second draft of the Public Forum proposal.
 2. Preston Daniels would like to begin the Forum with a ten-minute overview in lieu of a thirty-minute council meeting.
 3. Walter Reed stated that in the ten-minute overview, the Council should let the public know its charge from Executive Order Four.
 4. Reginald Jackson stated that the Subcommittee would like to find a facilitator to keep the discussion going and to summarize points made.
 5. Preston Daniels stated that the Council needs to ask the public for both problems and *solutions*.
 6. *Because the ideas of the Subcommittee were in draft form, they will not be placed on the Diversity Council website.*
- VI. Public Comment – Beverly Couch, IDED, had two comments:
- A. The Governor should meet with Directors personally to discuss diversity goals.
 - B. The Council should examine “at-will” positions, as they lend themselves to discrimination.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

- I. New Business
- II. Report to the Governor (Due June 30, 2009)
- III. Subcommittee Reports
- IV. Public Comment

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 4:36 p.m. The next regular meeting will be held on Thursday, May 14, from 2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. in the Knudsen Training Room, located on the first floor of the Jessie Parker Building, 510 East 12th Street, Des Moines, IA.